ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present invention provides a method and apparatus for improving the utilization of a resource in a shared client computer environment. The invention overcomes the problem inherent in using traditional computer programs on a shared client, by monitoring the status of an application, determining when an application does not need a resource, and causing the application to stop consuming the resource. In one embodiment, resource consumption is not halted, but the application is caused to use less of the resource. The invention detects when a user has stopped interaction with an application. This can occur, for instance, when the user removes an identifier from the end user terminal. When the user interaction stops, the invention has a mechanism to stop a program from consuming resources (or to reduce its resource usage) and to restart it (or return it to its original state) later. The invention further includes a procedure for stopping or reducing the resource usage of the application when the user has stopped interacting with it, and to restart it when the user begins (or is capable of beginning) interaction with it. All this is done without modifying the application in any way.